

## Message Text

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ACTION CEQ-02

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03

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O R 271033Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8494

INFO AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, XY (PETERSON, RUSSELL W.L

SUBJ: VISIT OF DR. PETERSON TO NIGER, JULY 26-26

SUMMARY: DR. PETERSON'S BRIEF TWENTY-FOUR HOUR VISIT TO NIAMEY WAS SUCCESSFUL. HE MET WITH PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE AND KEY OFFICIALS OF GON TO DISCUSS DROUGHT AND RELATED SUBJECTS AND DURING THESE DISCUSSIONS HE OBTAINED GON ASSURANCE THAT IT WOULD PARTICIPATE IN FORTHCOMING WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE OF BUCHAREST. END SUMMARY.

1. DR. PETERSON, ACCOMPANIED BY MR. LAWRENCE R. KEGAN OF WORLD POPULATION CRISIS COMMITTEE AND MR. LEON M.S. SLAWECKI, OF USIA, VISITED NIAMEY BRIEFLY JULY 25 AND 26 FOR WHAT WE CONSIDER TO HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL VISIT. GON WENT OUT OF ITS WAY TO ARRANGE FULL SCHEDULE, JUGGLING APPOINTMENTS TO FIT IN WITH DR. PETERSON'S FLIGHT SCHEDULE AND HIGH-LIGHTED BY MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE. DR. PETERSON ALSO SAW ACTING MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BOULAMA MANGA, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COOPERATION, ALFIDJA, MINISTER OF RURAL ECONOMY ALI SAIBOU AND SEVERAL AIDES, DIRECTOR OF METEOROLOGY DIALLO WHO REPORTED ON NIGER'S CLOUD SEEDING OPERATIONS AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF UNDP, WHO

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AND ORT. HE RECEIVED EMBASSY AND USAID BRIEFING ON LOCAL SCENE

AND DROUGHT SITUATION. HE AND HIS PARTY DEPARTED MID-MORNING JULY 26 FOR AGADEZ ACCOMPANIED BY ALFIDJA WHO HAD BEEN ASSIGNED BY GON AS ESCORT OFFICER WHILE IN AGADEZ.

2. AT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT, DR. PETERSON OUTLINED HIS VIEWS ON INTERDEPENDENCE OF MAN ALL OVER WORLD AND FINE BALANCE REQUIRED IF MAN IS TO LIVE IN HARMONY WITH NATURE AND OBTAIN NECESSITIES FOR LIFE INCLUDING WATER, PURE AIR, LAND, SHELTER AND MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD. HE POINTED OUT WORLD AT LARGE COULD LEARN FROM EXPERIENCES OF COUNTRIES OF SAHEL AS THEY SOUGHT DEAL WITH DROUGHT JUST AS SAHEL COUNTRIES MIGHT BENEFIT FROM RELATED EXPERIENCES AND ADVANCES OF COUNTRIES LIKE US. ONE EXAMPLE BEING GATE EXERCISE CURRENTLY UNDERWAY. HE TOLD PRESIDENT THAT, AS RECENT AID LEGISLATION INDICATED, NIGER COULD CONTINUE TO COUNT ON COOPERATION OF US IN ALLEVIATING EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND IMPROVING ITS CAPACITY TO TACKLE PROBLEMS POSED BY DROUGHT.

3. IN REPLY, PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE ASKED DR. PETERSON TO TAKE BACK TO US NIGER'S DEEP GRATITUDE FOR US ASSISTANCE WHICH HAD MEANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH FOR MANY IN COUNTRY. THIS ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING FOOD SUPPLIES AND OTHER GRANTS, WAS WELL CONCEIVED AND IMPLEMENTED AND ADVICE OF US TECHNICIANS ASSIGNED TO NIGER WAS VALUED. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE KOUNTCHE MEANT WHAT HE SAID ABOUT US AID AND HIS FAVORABLE COMMENTS WERE MORE THAN COMPLIMENTS FOR THE OCCASION. HE HAS NOT HESITATED TO CRITICIZE FOREIGN AID PROJECTS, ESPECIALLY SOME OF UNDP WHICH HE CONSIDERS BADLY DESIGNED. END COMMENT.

4. TURNING TO DR. PETERSON'S COMMENTS ON ENVIRONMENT AND THE SAHEL DROUGHT, KOUNTCHE SAID HE BELIEVED SITUATION HERE DIFFERENT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS FACED BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OF WEST WHICH CAUSED BY INDUSTRIALIZATION, ETC. IN NIGER, WHICH CHARACTERIZED BY FEW RESOURCES, GROWING POPULATION AND VAST EMPTY SPACES, PROBLEM CAME DOWN TO QUESTION OF WATER. THIS COULD BE OBTAINED NATURALLY OR BY CLOUD SEEDING OR FROM SUBSOIL AND IRRIGATION. STRATEGY FOR GON WAS TO EVOLVE RATIONAL WATER POLICY AS BASIS FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FARMERS AND SMALL SCALE FRAMING FOR NOMADS TO GIVE THEM ALTERNATIVE FOOD SUPPLIES AND START PROCESS OF THEIR SEDENTARIZATION. RE-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOURCES OF COUNTRY HAD TO BE APPLIED TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY.

5. AT EARLIER MEETINGS WITH MINISTERS AND WITH PRESIDENT, DR. PETERSON RAISED QUESTION OF POPULATION CONTROLS AND FORTHCOMING WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE. THIS DONE IN LOW KEY BECAUSE OF KNOWN NIGERIAN SENSITIVITIES TOWARDS FAMILY PLANNING AND GON POLICY AGAINST ANY SUCH PROGRAMS IN COUNTRY. MFA

REP DOUBTED NIGER WOULD ATTEND BUCHAREST MEETING POINTING  
OUT LACK OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL IN NIGER ON SUBJECT AND NEED  
FOR CENSUS AS BASIS TO FORMULATE A NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY.  
HOWEVER, PRESIDENT INFORMED DR. PETERSON THAT NIGER WOULD BE  
REPRESENTED AT MEETING BY ONE OR TWO DELEGATES. DR.  
PETERSON EXPRESSED HOPE HE COULD WORK CLOSELY WITH NIGER DE-  
LEGATION AND OFFERED TO ASSIST AS APPROPRIATE.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
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**Draft Date:** 27 JUL 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** kelleyw0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974NIAMEY02563  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION CEQ  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** kelleyw0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 03 JUN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <03 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <27 FEB 2003 by kelleyw0>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** VISIT OF DR. PETERSON TO NIGER, JULY 26-26 SUMMARY: DR. PETERSON'S BRIEF TWENTY-FOUR HOUR VISIT TO NIAMEY  
**TAGS:** OVIP, XY, (PETERSON, RUSSELL W L)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005